

3. The Question of Direct Action: The Syndicalist As Moralist

Direct action in the economic realm, as noted in the preceding chapter, was defined by syndicalists as any activity carried on outside the parliamentary sphere by the workers themselves. Such action could encompass a variety of deeds, from joining a union, to purchasing union-made goods, to leaving corks out of wine casks. But since the ultimate goal of revolutionary syndicalism was the construction of a just universe, the battle was unmistakably a moral one. That which the proletariat was seeking to overturn was a society based on competition, inequality, and exploitation by a corrupt class, the bourgeoisie. In the factories the capitalist denigrated the worker by forcing him to endure inhuman surroundings. His usurpation of the product of the working man's labor was a villainous theft. In the chamber halls the middle class manipulated a government constituted solely for the preservation of wealth stolen from the producers. The means to revolution, however, must practically reflect ends. Demoralized workers could not wage a moral struggle to bring into existence a just society. Justice could not be achieved realistically through immoral acts. Therefore, as further defined by syndicalism, direct action included a host of rather prosaic activities designed to raise the moral as well as the material well-being of the working class. The dialogue on morality suggested activities covering a broad gamut: from protecting the family unit to preserving the workers' health. But a large degree of syndicalist efforts were directed toward achieving three specific reforms: education, temperance, and birth control.

Perhaps in no other area does syndicalist thinking follow Proudhon's dictates so closely as it does concerning his conclusions regarding the nature of man and society. Indeed, as Annie Kriegel has noted, the labor movement was infused with Proudhonian ideas on morality.(1) For Proudhon, work was equated with man's existence and defined him as human. Work was a basic ethical standard and a social necessity. Labor was the only way for man to transcend his "undisciplined egoism" and voluntarily fulfill his mission to bring into existence a new moral order.(2)

Therefore, the dignity of human labor had to be preserved from capitalist exploitation as it existed in the workshop and in the government. In the literature dealing with direct action in the preceding chapter, variations of Proudhon's ideas on morality provide a strong underlying theme. Producers associating and acting within the unions developed a consciousness of their individual and collective misery. They were moved to struggle for their own emancipation. Direct action intensified the virtues of the working class. Proletarian morality was to provide the basis of the new society. The rhetoric of revolutionary syndicalism is full of these ethical postulates.

Also common in the literature is the portrayal of those institutions aimed at corrupting the worker and his family. For anarchists, in keeping with Proudhon's aversion to government, the political system and its processes constituted the ultimate evil. To Antoine Antignac, syndicalism's task was to liberate the individual, "muzzled by authority" and immobilized by the snares of a false morality that "prevented his heart from beating with altruism."⁽³⁾ Most heinous of the social crimes was the degradation of the individual and the family. The capitalist had "destroyed the balance between supply and demand [and had] created wage earners and misery," exclaimed a 1902 propaganda pamphlet published by the FBT. Because of the capitalists, "the family life of the workers and the small employer is only an historical memory."⁽⁴⁾

To such theorists, the capitalist-created state fortified the "bouge immonde" [filthy hovel] that was present society.⁽⁵⁾ For others, that hovel was more tangible. It was the factory and the life industrialism imposed on workers. An article appearing in an 1888 publication of the FBT outlined "the profoundly immoral" conditions of industry. Comrades worked in buildings defectively constructed and badly ventilated. They breathed noxious gases, were exposed to dangerous materials and machines, and labored long hours.⁽⁶⁾ Even if the physical surroundings were improved, workers would still be at a disadvantage, for industrialism had altered the nature of labor itself.

Work was now intensified. The laborer was chained to a machine that moved at an accelerated pace, noted a contributor to La Voix du Peuple. He no longer had time to talk to his neighbor or look at the sky. The machine's demands, compounded by the long hours of work, created great "cerebral exhaustion."⁽⁷⁾ Fatigue demoralized: it was the largest cause of premature birth among women and alcoholism among men. A 1906 report to the CGT stressed the fact that overwork "reduces the human being to the vegetative position of beast of burden, hinders the blossoming of [the worker's] feelings, and prohibits him from creating an interior of love and thought."⁽⁸⁾ Greater leisure was needed to expand the intellectual, moral, and political life of the worker. Delegates to the 1898 CGT congress at Rennes heard a report on the benefits to be derived from a weekly repose. A

shorter work week would give the laborer a chance "to rest his fatigued limbs, quiet his agitated nerves, calm his over-excited intelligence, and revive his diminished strength." Fewer working hours would also allow him the opportunity to be a social creature. With a day of rest the worker could "fulfill his rights of citizenship" and take "pleasure at being a living, thinking, playing man." (9) All workers had "the right to enjoy the social riches" of retirement, noted a 1901 report to the CGT. (10) But long labor meant that at the age of fifty the worker was deformed and broken. (11)

Workers had the moral right to realize a better life: social law must conform to moral law was the theme. But the immoral capitalists cared little for the social interests of the workers, noted Fernand and Maurice Pelloutier. The contemporary worker labored one hour longer each day than had the worker of the Middle Ages. But the growing number of intermediary agents existing between production and consumption had increased the cost of living. Inflation meant that even with longer hours of labor, the worker realized a lower real wage than his medieval counterpart, the authors charged. Besides being forced to endure the degrading conditions in the workshop, the proletariat had to suffer the indignity of living in dirty tenements with stinking latrines on each floor, crowded together on tiny streets polluted by fumes from factories, in neighborhoods that bred crime. (12)

How did the bourgeoisie respond to its immoral creation? When confronted with the unsavory conditions in the factories, the government insisted that capitalists were possessed of sufficient "sentiments of humanity to take the necessary measures to protect the life and health of the worker." (13) Such "humane sentiments" did nothing to improve the inhuman conditions, however. If the bourgeoisie felt any flicker of humanity within it, it generally responded with philanthropy, such as sponsoring "les soupes populaires." The "moral work" of bourgeois-sponsored soup kitchens, warned Henri Couthier in 1899, was really "calculated to maintain the actual social order with its vices and defects" and to debase workers further by making them as dependent on charity as some were on alcohol. (14)

If the middle class was unable to correct the abuses it inflicted upon the workers, it was the proletarians themselves, acting through the unions, who must labor to maintain the moral worth necessary to regenerate the world. Syndicalist literature is filled with assurances that each one was equal to the task. The May Day speech of a Toulouse deputy at the Paris bourse in 1901 outlined the workers' mission. The time had come, he said, when labor could "Regenerate this world of errors and illusions, so that in working, one can live not as a convict, but as a free man." (15) The new hero of world revolution was the working man. In him, Lagardelle declared,

are revived the eternal elements of the culture: the sense of dignity, the taste for liberty, the spirit of independence, sacrifice, and struggle. Beyond that lies all the ruins of bourgeois decadence, [the worker] remains the depositor of sublime sentiments supporting the world, and he remains the great heroic leader of civilization.(16)

SYNDICALIST HEROISM AGAINST BOURGEOIS DECADENCE

Working-class virtue preserved in unionism was the way for the innate morality of the proletariat to be augmented and refined. In a 1912 speech to the CGT, André Chalopin of the teachers' union outlined the virtues of the syndicalist.

To be a syndicalist, [he declared] is to have a heart of ardent love for the working class, of that working class without which society would be nothing and which society too often misunderstands; it is to feel a shudder, an anguish, when one sees unrolling the black cortege of the strike; it is to feel a sudden respect for workers who, often by the simple act of solidarity, come to the aid of some comrades [demoralized] by long privations and condemned to misery.(17)

Workers possessed qualities the bourgeoisie lacked. They were to be the new moral force in the world. But the social revolution also required the assistance of the unions. According to Louis Niel, syndicalism provoked

the best of moral sentiments in grouping workers for the struggle against the common evil. It proves to them the dangers of isolation, impotence, and egoism; the impossibility of individualism of the bourgeois kind; and develops in them the indispensable sentiment of solidarity without which all social life would be Utopian.(18)

Unionism was synonymous with morality, noted one writer, since man is moral only because he is social.(19)

Unions were to aid in the ethical task of directing the development of class consciousness. They were also to provide moral direction. Workers had been accustomed to receiving moral guidance within the workshops and labor associations.(20) Guilds had always concerned themselves with the ethics of their members. The compagnonnages were deeply involved in the moral health of their brethren. Those who did bad work were excluded from the organizations. All members were governed by a strict moral code: they must

pay their debts, they must not drink to get drunk, swear, or abuse a confidence. Even after they were outlawed in 1791, the compagnonnages continued to exert a strong force on labor throughout the Second Empire. Thus, it was natural that the bourses and the syndicats would carry on many of the same traditions, since it is likely that many "companions" became union members during the early stages of anarchosyndicalism. (21)

The unions would also direct the individual worker in carrying out the moral work of revolution. Action through association, confirmed Lagardelle,

instructs the working class in its formation of combat. [The proletariat] is the only class which can, by the conditions of its life and its affirmations of conscience, renew the world, but on the condition that it remains alienated from bourgeois society. It takes the producers in their own cadres . . . and it organizes their revolt against personal authority; . . . it gives body finally to the specific ideas of the proletariat. (22)

The labor union was "a school of heroism." Strikes constituted "A certain indice of the moral elevation of the masses." May Day exercises were demonstrations of the moral renewal of the workers in the face of government repression. (23)

The workers' ethical struggle received the sanction even of Christ and the early church fathers, according to the keynote speaker at a 1905 conference of the Union des Syndicats. "The moral beauties of life" had been "harvested by misery and vice," proclaimed Abbé Vral. But workers had the "right and power to make a personal and untiring effort to ameliorate and transform their present social conditions without waiting for God to replace this effort by a miracle." Moreover, direct action was equivalent to the position taken by the early church fathers, who had decried riches and materialism, noted Vral. St. Ambrose had professed that "Riches beyond measure, by whatever title and whatever means they have been acquired, always carry with them a principle of injustice and inhumanity." St. Bernard had even cried out in the middle of a sermon that "Interest is theft." Christ too had declared that he had come so that all men "would be living each day more abundantly." The way to fulfill Christ's promise and defend workers' interests, declared the cleric, was to join the "red syndicats." Take care, capitalists, warned the Abbé, for the worker is now literate and organized. He is fighting gambling and alcoholism, as he was fighting capitalism. Surely Christ's ethical kingdom was at hand: and it would have a reddish cast. (24)

If not founded on Christianity, the future would surely be based on the ethics of the workshop. The social order of the future would rest "not on authority, but on exchange;

not on domination, but on reciprocity; not on sovereignty, but on the social contract," noted a CGT resolution in 1919.(25) It would be a society of abundance, based on a ten-hour week and two-month paid vacations, prophesized Armand Champion.(26) In the new moral universe even former capitalists would work, for work would be "an indispensable gymnastic to corporate health," carried on for the good of all.(27) In a word, the future would see established an altruistic society, according to anarchist Rieutor. Since it would be a libertarian universe, there would be no need of morality.(28)

MORAL ACTIVITY DESIGNED FOR ALL

In preparation for that future, syndicalists offered a host of suggestions. To many the course to moral uplift and social revolution lay in the development of a clean mind and a healthy body. Personal hygiene, diet, couture provided the key. A contributor to Le Libertaire, Adrien, believed that vegetarianism was a means of helping "the ensemble of the social movement" along the path toward morality and good health.(29) Another agreed with feminists that women should throw away their corsets ("instruments of torture") and adopt the same dress as that worn by female bicyclists. Women must not, however, wear culottes, exclaimed the writer, because this costume made women look like "ridiculous monsters."(30)

In a 1902 article, Louis Niel exhorted workers to make their bodies "an instrument as adept as possible for translating orders of the spirit." Frequent bathing, both in summer and winter, was the key to good health, he continued. Workers should demand free public baths in each commune, and take advantage of those installed in union halls and in the bourses. Furthermore, working-class families should enjoy the outdoors as much as possible. Breathing fresh air and communing with nature would help workers to think more clearly. Above all, men should stay away from alcohol. The money saved through abstinence could be spent on baths and practicing hygiene.

Women must also change their personal habits, particularly in the matter of nursing their children. "I know that some women, hoping to preserve their figures, give their babies to wet nurses," said Niel. Such practices "violate[d] all natural and psychological laws" and produced children afflicted with rickets and scrofula, "incapable later of all action." Comrades must strive to rid themselves of their faults, concluded Niel. "Let's work to develop our muscles and our biceps; and you, women, nurse your kids if you want to have men; we will have great need of them in the next Revolution."(31)

The avoidance of numerous pitfalls was the way to moral uplift. A contributor to La Voix du Peuple condemned spectator sports as a scourge to morality. "Work is totally debased by sports, by the ring, and by boxing. In place of

going to one's union, instead of organizing for liberty or work, [workers] go to the theatres in the evening, reveling in and being brutalized by watching champions in the arena." Sports, like alcohol, the writer warned, served as "dissolvants" upon the workers' morality.(32) Pettiness was another disruptive factor to moral elevation. It is natural to think that one is the best, lectured M. Gastel in La Voix du Peuple. But vanity is exclusionary and must be avoided. One brother must never criticize another, and must always defend all unionists against adversity. In this way, "sentiments of moral solidarity" could be advanced.(33)

Union discipline was "the best guardian against capital," according to anarchist Constant Martin.(34) Some workers, however, complained that syndicalism was too vigilant in its campaign against immorality. A 1904 contributor to Le Libertaire, signed "Francis," criticized the "workers' mentality" demonstrated at the Bourges congress of the CGT. At that meeting delegates had upheld the proscription of a group of Versailles hairdressers from bourse membership, based on the charge that they were "pornographers" for having held a conference on voluntary procreation. The crime of lèse-pudeur [an affront to modesty] with which the coiffeuses were charged had apparently made them morally unfit to unionize. Syndicalists could hardly break the chains of capitalism, scoffed Francis, when they were "still entwined in the chains of [their own] ignorance." The confrères would do well to recall the words of Anatole France, who stated that "ignorance is the worst kind of servitude, and morality is only another less dangerous form.(35)

Fernand Pelloutier envisioned a more esteemed function for the bourses as a way to elevate the workers' mentality. The bourses performed numerous services for workers, he noted, from offering courses, to providing placement and shelter for traveling workers, to compiling data on fluctuations in employment and living costs. The bourses not only exercised "a material influence" on the conditions of labor, concluded Pelloutier, they also had exerted "a moral influence on the direction of the socialist movement."(36)

Syndicalist organization was aimed at producing a new aristocracy, observed Félicien Challaye: workers cultivated by lectures, discussions, action, would become an elite of strong individuals capable of administering and governing.(37) But to achieve this end, workers must be educated to the task under the direction of the bourses, the unions, and the popular universities.

EDUCATION AS A FORM OF DIRECT ACTION

The idea that education was necessary to the moral development of the workers was a common theme in syndicalist literature. Often the goal was perceived as being revolutionary in nature. Only through self-learning could

workers "assure themselves by themselves of their emancipation," observed Paul Delesalle.(38) To anarchosyndicalists, who believed that social revolution could occur only through individual perfection, intellectual development was a necessary revolutionary action preceding social reorganization.(39) Clearly, education was regarded as another form of direct action: a precondition for carrying out the revolution and a necessity for directing future society. Workers must be sufficiently knowledgeable to administer the new state themselves, was the conclusion of a Parisian group, "or at least control the devoted intellectuals who will consent to assume the responsibility."(40)

Frequently working-class leaders looked to the more practical aspects of education. Workers must be taught the means by which to battle personally against the high cost of living. The fight against inflation, noted a 1912 CGT report, could be accomplished through abstention from drinking, gambling, unnecessary spending, and by carefully adhering to a budget.(41) Additionally, noted E. Barré at this same congress, education was a more acceptable means of distraction for the workers, being infinitely superior to sitting around in cabarets, singing "stupid songs" and listening to "inept recitals that often morally poison" those who hear them.(42)

The fact that workers seemed to prefer moral poison to intellectual uplift was the result of an immoral social and economic system that had saddled the proletariat with inferior educational facilities. As children of the poor, workers had been taken out of school at an early age in order to contribute to their families' support. As workers, they had been forced to terminate their primary school careers at twelve or thirteen in order to begin their apprenticeships.(43) What little education they had received had been "adapted to the needs of conservative capitalists," noted delegates to the 1908 congress of the FBT.(44) This was why workers had long demanded that useful, free, secular, and compulsory instruction be made available to children.(45) Many syndicalists called for union-sponsored vocational training, believing that even the trade schools were tainted by capitalism. Delegate Lauche of the mechanics' union observed at the 1898 Rennes congress that the public school education currently being offered apprentices was designed to make them "afraid of the boss."(46) These gross educational deficiencies, explained Paul Delesalle, inspired in workers a desire to know and receive instruction. No wonder the bourse libraries, although admittedly sparse, were well-attended by men and women, even at the end of ten or twelve hours in the factories. Technical and scientific works, as well as books by Darwin, Marx, Guesde, Zola, France, Lamennais, and Rousseau were "read with avidity," declared Delesalle. Their tattered covers attested to their use!(47)

Working-class leaders suggested a host of other means by which to circumvent bourgeois teaching and gain a moral

education. Workers' study groups were important. So too was attendance at union-sponsored theatres, night courses, popular soirées, and recitals. Another important vehicle to workers' intellectual emancipation was the popular university.

Although a history of the movement has yet to be written, the universités populaires were interesting phenomena in early twentieth-century France.(48) These universities, established in Paris and the provinces beginning in 1899, were often founded under the aegis of local industry, banks, or municipal authorities. Most of the lecturers were local teachers and professors, although at L'Union Mouffetard in Paris, members of the printers' union taught many of the classes. Despite the bourgeois coloration of these people's universities, they were vigorously supported by the syndicalist movement. In numerous instances, universities were initiated by the local bourses or cooperatives. Often the bourses supported the institutions financially, either by direct monetary contributions or by providing the classes with a meeting place. Syndicalists had practical as well as idealistic motives for supporting the universities: since so many members were workers, such support was a means to introduce the working class to the union hall and, thus, build membership.

In most cases, the universities were expressly designed to meet the needs of a working-class population.(49) La Fraternelle was housed in "the most populous" quarter in Paris. At Rouen the university met in an exclusively working-class district. In Marseille meetings were held in brasseries and cafés, places where workers would normally congregate, throughout all the quarters on a rotating basis. Members of Le Contrat Social met in a wine cellar, although the secretary, a temperance advocate, admitted that the university was seeking another meeting hall.

The curricula of the popular universities, unlike that of the bourses and the unions, which were vocational-oriented, emphasized a broader liberal arts approach. At Annecy lecture topics ranged from researching paternity to a discussion of Fourier. The university at Vincennes took its members on visits to the gas works. At Marseille auditors went on promenades to local factories and historical monuments. In Clermont-Ferrand there were botanical excursions throughout the summer. At Montpellier lectures covered such subjects as the Commune, strikes, and unionism. But since workers there allegedly had "a taste for music and a true ear," musicales were frequently staged. Throughout the provinces, conversational German seemed to be a popular course.

So too were subjects appealing to women, since women students were often the mainstay of these universities. At Rouen controversial subjects, such as feminism, were discussed at least once a month. The Bar-le-Duc université populaire offered lectures on clothes-making and child care. Daytime classes at the Montmartre UP were dismissed at the

hour coinciding with the children's release from school. In the industrial town of Le Cateau, one-third of the active members of that university were women and girls. The university of Saintes offered coeducational classes. This radical approach, boasted the secretary of the organization, would serve "to redirect the Catholic mentality of separating the sexes" and teach boys "to respect their female friends." At Montpellier the secretary proudly proclaimed that antialcohol posters hung everywhere. That UP planned to open a temperance café in the future; meanwhile only beer was served on the premises.

Workers apparently responded to the appeals made in their behalf. The membership of Bar-le-Duc was composed of 400 families of workers and minor employees. The thirty bourgeois members there paid higher dues. Membership in the Alais university was more middle class: of the forty or fifty regular auditors, most were artisans, small-business men, or employees. The recording secretary noted, however, that the purely working-class element was beginning to attend. The regular members at Montpellier were classed as being socialists. The stated goal of that university was to contact "the real people" and shun the bourgeoisie. The leaders of the Besançon UP sought to place workers in contact with intellectuals, so its activity was very high, with over twenty-two conferences offered every week.

The work of the universities was not easy. Those with knowledge to impart were not always eager to do so gratis. Some teachers, according to Delesalle, had difficulty dealing with "the rude logic of the workers."⁽⁵⁰⁾ Others had problems making a shift in pedagogical techniques: different teaching methods had to be employed on tired workers than one was accustomed to using on children forced to attend school.⁽⁵¹⁾ Politics also appear to have been a danger to the longevity of the universities. Many of the UP's took their cue from the CGT's Charter of Amiens and forbade all discussion of politics. At Bar-le-Duc, for instance, no newspapers were allowed in the reading room, and members were admonished against making political propaganda. In their UP, noted the recording secretary, the Declaration of the Rights of Man (with appropriate modification regarding the passage on private property) was the only political program supported by the membership. Admittedly, some members were disappointed in the neutral stand taken by their UP's, asserting that political arguments were a normal and sought-after stimulant after a long day's labor.⁽⁵²⁾

Working-class apathy was another problem. Workers might enjoy the facilities and programs offered by the Angers university, noted its secretary M. Mercier. But few stepped forward to assist in running the operation. "Ah! In the cabarets, before a bottle of white wine," the comrades were quick to speak of revolution, he mourned. But when it came to doing anything more than talking, the workers "had not a speck of energy." "Workers," he pleaded, "I have only the evening . . . to occupy myself with all

humanitarian things which are of my heart." Surely others might help in this important crusade. The dearth of worker members at Calais failed to discourage that university's director.(53) "If we succeed," he said, "we will know that we have had a hand in the development of the humanity of tomorrow, which we want to be healthy and intelligent."(54)

THE VIRTUES OF "SALUBRIOUS REVOLT"

Safeguarding the workers' mental and physical health was regarded as a practical necessity. Syndicalist leaders knew that workers could accomplish nothing if their brains were besotted and their physical well-being impaired because of alcoholism. Thus, one of the most vigorous moralistic campaigns carried on by anarchosyndicalism was aimed at leading workers to sobriety. Published statistics devoted to pointing out the depths of French impropriety were common in the working-class literature.(55) The Pelloutiers noted that alcoholism was "the characteristic of our age." The consumption of alcohol in the department of the Seine, for example, had increased by 13 1/2 liters per person per year, with workers consuming more liquor than the other two classes. Particularly dangerous, they concluded, was the absinthe cult that had taken hold of the nation.(56) In a 1905 study Auguste Besse lauded syndicalism's efforts to combat alcoholism, since by that year, France was leading the world in the number of alcoholics.(57)

What was the cause of drunkenness? Syndicalists laid the blame at the doorstep of industrial capitalism. The 1898 report at the first full-scale working-class discussion on alcoholism noted that drunkenness increased proportionally to the heightened intensity of capitalism. Mechanization had made the worker "a prolongation, a spoke in the industrial wheel." Industrial organization also discouraged the stimulation of technical intelligence, thereby weakening the worker's professional knowledge, his faculties for judgment, and his moral sense.(58)

The physical and mental brutalization of the workers was an overriding theme in the CGT's campaign for an eight-hour day. Long hours were physically and morally harmful, members declared, and led to alcoholism and tuberculosis.(59) Piecework was another culprit. According to Raymond Joran, workers were forced to overproduce in order to maintain their wage levels. In response to these "unnatural forces," workers turned to drink.(60) Alcoholism, concluded typographer Emile Girault, was due to "fatigue, work, boredom, sadness, and the need for diversion after long days passed in the capitalist prison."(61)

It was natural for a worker to seek a stimulant, particularly if that stimulant was his cheapest form of nourishment. In 1902 D. Sieruin noted in an article on alcoholism that drunkenness was highest in those trades

which required a greater expenditure of strength, but where wages were the lowest. Needing to compensate for his loss of energy, the worker turned to cheap liquor, which was less expensive than food.(62) Why was this so? The Pelloutiers blamed inflation caused by competition. The exploited worker, with insufficient wages to eat properly, could gain temporary strength with cheap liquor.(63) "Meat and wine are expensive," noted the 1898 Rennes report, "and you know with what rarity they appear on our tables. Alcohol replaces them for a great many workers."(64) Additionally, declared one writer, drinking was a means to distract the worker from the tawdriness, the overcrowding, and the loneliness of his circumstances.(65) Alcohol, concluded the Pelloutiers, "is not the cause but the effect of misery."(66)

Alcoholism was also the result of bourgeois machinations aimed at subverting the workers' struggle for emancipation. The entry on "Alcoholism" in the Encyclopédie du mouvement syndicaliste, written by Dr. Paul-Maurice Legrain, warned workers that the capitalists used liquor to turn them into "dupes." Drinking debilitated the body, diminished muscular energy, decreased life expectancy, and produced senility.(67) "Alcoholism is the surest agent of the capitalist bourgeois in that it atrophies the conscience and reduces the force of resistance of the proletariat," stated a resolution at the Rennes congress.(68) It also filled asylums full of alcoholics and hospitals full of "rachitic, scrofulous, epileptic" children, "unfortunate fruits of alcoholic fathers." The report continued:

Here we are, people who profess that fathers of the family have no right to impose on their children this or that confessional religion, this or that philosophical concept. Yet here we are accepting the right to condemn to intellectual death and physical suffering the descendants struck by [the fathers'] vices and miserable passions.(69)

It was not with "an army of degenerates" or "inveterate drunks, whose brains were pickled and whose bodies were atrophied by alcohol," that the new society would be built, warned A. Amonot. Rather, that "noble task" was to be reserved "to workers united, grouped syndically, to men conscious of their rights and obligations, to healthy and robust workers possessing all the moral and physical elements indispensable to combat.(70) "History shows us that the greatest revolutionaries were nearly all water drinkers," professed anarchosyndicalist Fernand-Paul in Le Libertaire. "Let the bourgeoisie wallow in their orgies and insobriety. We will go on with our social renewal," he stated. But that work would require comrades who could become vigorous, robust men, consciously capable of "salubrious revolt."(71)

The struggle to become sober revolutionaries would not

be an easy one, since capitalists used alcohol to retain their power over the proletariat. A 1904 article in Revue Vinicole had warned the middle class of the dangers of passing antialcohol legislation. If the cafés were closed, the writer declared, workers would soon be "breaking from the workshops, red flag in hand, shouting the 'Carmagnole' in the streets." Responding to this observation, La Voix du Peuple agreed with the vintners. "Alcohol, like religion, was a good way to keep workers under the capitalist stranglehold," the editor noted. There was little danger that the government would try too hard to control the scourge, the article concluded, because the leaders of the Third Republic were well aware of the beneficial political effects to be obtained from working-class alcoholism.(72)

For A. Bruckère, writing in La Guerre Sociale, alcoholism was clearly the tool of the government. "Alcohol kills the revolution first; it kills the man next," he charged. The government would never do anything about the problem because it was composed of petty bourgeoisie, masons, "savings-bank clientele," and Russian sympathizers. These parasites were men who "fraud in wine and starve the vintner, who fraud in alcohol and brutalize the worker, who fraud in milk and poison the child." There were one-half million alcohol-dependent people in France, Bruckère concluded. "What electoral strength!"(73) The corrupt Roman empire had provided the people with bread and circuses. The Third Republic gave the masses cheap liquor and patriotic displays. Noting in La Voix du Peuple that the bars were "in full swing" on Bastille Day in 1902, A. Levy wryly applauded the café owners. It was these "bistro poisoners, monopolists of alcohol and patriotism, and entertainers of the people," Levy charged, on whom the government depended to preserve itself in office.(74)

Because of the government's need for a debauched public, the conclusion was that the passage of antialcohol legislation was only a smokescreen. A 1900 piece in La Voix du Peuple noted that the government chose not to check alcoholism because it used insobriety as a means to control workers at home and people in the colonies. Alcohol helped to squelch any ideas of revolt among the colonial people, the editor charged. Only Algeria had effectively protested against French imperialism, and that was because its Muslim population did not drink.(75) Nor could the government "reform manners by taxes," declared A. Bourchet. The government had increased the alcohol tax, so that liquor would become prohibitive to the poor. Instead, it was making "more money on vice."(76)

All the laws in the world were useless: alcoholism would end with the integral emancipation of the worker, concluded those who wrote about the disease. But once again, syndicalists preached that the revolution must be practical and incremental. If alcoholism directly paralleled the intensity of capitalist exploitation, then the first step toward diminishing the disease was to improve the workers' resistance. To that end, unionism must fight

for better material conditions, increased moral authority, and greater intellectual power. If alcoholism was worse among lower paid workers, observed Joseph Blanchard, secretary-general of the Nantes bourse, then the remedy was to fight for higher wages.(77)

Fewer working hours would also be an effective reform in the war against alcoholism. Employers always argued that shorter hours would only give workers more time to spend in the cafés. This was a false assumption. The remedy to alcoholism could be found in the suppression of human misery and workers' exploitation, declared Secretary Bouchet of the leatherworkers' union in 1901. The capitalists must assure the workers of

greater well-being, security in their work, less fear for the future; do not tear away from the workers; homes the woman, [who is] moral educator of the child; see that the worker has a comfortable environment, open to all joys; thanks to a remunerative salary, you will also see fewer miseries seeking to forget their troubles and to lose their reason in "the green fairy [absinthe]."(78)

If the work of moral liberation must be the work of the proletarians themselves, then militants must become "mortal enemies of strong drink" and "propagandists of temperance," declared the Rennes resolution on alcoholism.(79) Apparently, attempting to induce temperance among the militants was not an easy task. The formulation of the Rennes resolution was negotiated over a rocky road. Many delegates were opposed even to the idea of discussing alcoholism. Metallurgist Braun demanded to know if the meeting was a workers' congress or a health conference. Another delegate enthusiastically suggested that a syndicalist absinth be bottled!(80) At the Bourges congress in 1904, when the question of alcoholism was again on the agenda, a reporter for La Voix du Peuple noted that in his survey of a particular restaurant frequented by congressional delegates, only seven of the nine seated at one table were drinking water.(81)

Such reluctance to stop drinking was apparent in the fact that in 1906 a workers' temperance group, L'Association des Travailleurs Antialcooliques, housed at the Paris bourse, was formed. Three years later, according to E. Quillent of the umbrella and cane makers' union, membership in the group numbered only 300.(82) Since it was apparent that workers were not leaping in great numbers onto the teetotalers' bandwagon, L. Saufrignon urged temperance advocates to direct their efforts to the young. "Don't waste time among the drunks," he charged. Instead, concentrate on impressing the next generation of workers that temperance would assure them of their morality and

their health. Only then would they become good militants.(83)

THE STRUGGLE TO SAVE THE FAMILY FROM CAPITALIST ASSAULTS

The need to provide for the future of the workers' children and to safeguard the family was another moral preoccupation of the working-class leaders. In keeping with Proudhon's notion that the family was the ethical core of society, syndicalists praised familial virtues and sought means by which to keep the family safe from bourgeois corruption. Liberalism was atomistic and bred social disorganization. Industrialism produced large cities in which workers existed with no point of social reference. Capitalism was a greedy Moloch that devoured women and children and destroyed the proletarian family. The family is "the embryo of humanity," and the familial foyer "an emblem of liberty," declared Etienne Bellot in La Voix du Peuple. But in actual society, distorted by capitalism, brothers were competitors, husband and wife enemies. Marriage contracted out of considerations other than love were acts of prostitution. The true family, possible only under socialism, must be the symbol of the human species.(84)

Anarchists also stressed the fact that the most basic human sentiments and relationships were deprecated as a result of the existing social milieu. As currently constituted, the family was an unnatural grouping based on economic domination. Love was "the sentiment debased by marriage." Marriage was "the immoral mercantilism" that had invented the family. The family was "a mechanism of intrigue, hypocrisy, immorality," charged anarchist Pierre Comont.(85) One of the most hideous aspects of the traditional family was that it perpetuated the idea of paternal authority. Because of its patriarchal nature, the family was the best "support of the government and the prop of the past," according to Sainte-Andréa. As absolute master of his children's thoughts, the father instilled in his children feelings of passive obedience, thereby unwittingly raising his sons for the barracks and for electoral servitude.(86) Male authority was the fruit of a usurpation confirmed over time through the weakness of the victims, asserted André Girard in 1885. This authority produced timidity, mediocrity of the spirit, and a general weakening of morality in wives and children. Working-class fathers must come to understand the "illegitimacy" of what they had always considered to be their right, Girard concluded.(87) Libertarians preached that the family must be reconstituted on the basis of sexual harmony, noted "Vulgus" in 1905. But such harmony was dependent on a social milieu free of all moral servitude, this libertarian proclaimed.(88)

For anarchists and syndicalists the family could

survive only in a well-ordered future society free of economic and psychological exploitation. For the pragmatic syndicalists the preservation of the family depended upon reforms in the present. Parents must be free to continue the task of educating the young. Mothers must join together to regenerate the world, declared A. Bouvard in 1900. Only when mothers had taught their children that all men are brothers and that "the soil of every country [was] lighted by the same sun" would peace prevail.(89) Because of their importance as purveyors of morality, women should be allowed to remain at home. But if this arrangement were not possible,, declared a contributor, Paul Chanvin, to the Information Ouvrière et Sociale in 1918, then legislation must assure women of a decent work environment so they would be equal to the task of devoting their evening hours to educating their children.(90)

Fathers must also be allowed sufficient time to spend with their families. A weekly repose, noted an 1898 CGT resolution, would give the working-class father time to enjoy the pleasures of being surrounded by his loving family. Delegates further agreed that unless the father had more time, he could not adequately oversee the education of his children, "follow their progress, direct their young intellects, and provoke in them the development of impartial feelings and generous passions."(91)

Preservation of the family also required that children be properly educated. Syndicalists constantly stressed the important role of the bourses and unions in aiding parents to educate the young. Children should be prevented from working until they reached the age of sixteen, declared the Bulletin Officiel in 1887. This most crucial period when children's strength and intelligence were developing should be reserved for education.(92) Delegate Chosle suggested at the 1912 Le Havre congress that the bourses should take an active role in educating the young. Nurseries could be established where the young proletarians would learn revolutionary songs "they could understand." The bourses could organize summer camps and physical education programs so the young would develop "good physiques, muscles, and grace." Good technical education must also be provided, stated Chosle, in order to turn the children of the proletariat into useful workers rather than into "arrivistes, wash-outs, pedants, or unhappy déclassés."(93)

Most important to a child's well-being was an adequate apprenticeship. Apprentice training currently was in the hands of the middle class; delegates to the Rennes congress agreed that the unions must take full control in determining the number of apprentices.(94) The future of the child depended upon his or her ability to support himself or herself by means of a useful trade. Not to provide him or her with adequate training would be immoral.(95) Regulation of apprentices further ensured that the young worker would not flood into the labor market and continue to depress the father's wages.

THE SABOTAGE OF LIVING MATTER

Trying to survive "the iron law of wages" also served as the inspiration for a moral crusade undertaken in support of "Neo-Malthusianism." "The fecundity of the working class is the ultimate resource of the ruling oligarchy," asserted the Pelloutiers. The poor continued to increase their numbers, while the rich--fearful of morcellation and in the face of rising inflation--silently practiced birth control.⁹⁶ The danger of working-class proliferation was noted in a report given at the Bourges congress of the CGT by one of the leading proponents of Neo-Malthusianism, anarchist Paul Robin. Too many children created a drain on the family's already strained resources. Numerous births contributed to unemployment. A large pool of jobless, whose ranks were swelled by the young, ensured that employers need not listen to union demands. Further, unemployed youths often became apaches or, worse, soldiers. To prevent this fate, Robin urged workers to stop reproducing. The "sabotage" of their own "living matter," he noted, would assure a better standard of living for all and make communism not a utopia, but a fact. "Workers," exhorted Louis Grandidier in 1910, "if you wish to put an end to patronal exploitation, end your lapinisme! Make fewer children." (97)

That birth control was another form of direct action was the message of other syndicalists. Neo-Malthusianism, said Roy of the textile workers, was the "grèves des ventres." (98) "If the workers do not wish to tighten their belts to the larger profit of the boss," declared Gustave Cauvin in La Voix du Peuple, then they must stop producing like animals. Workers' suffering could only be a check on revolution. Pauperization of the masses was not a vehicle of revolution because the miserable only became "the clientele of bistros and the army of the jaune." No wonder the ruling class struggles so violently against Neo-Malthusianism, Cauvin concluded. (99)

While the CGT did not officially sanction Neo-Malthusianism, as Francis Ronsin notes in her study of birth control and depopulation in France, it did give its unofficial support. (100) The Confederation often passed out birth control devices, provided information, and issued numerous tracts on the subject. (101) One such pamphlet circulated by the CGT was entitled Syndicalisme et néo-malthusianisme. A high birth rate among workers served as a check on unionism, declared the authors of the brochure. Sometimes pauperization of the worker did increase working-class militancy. But more often, effective class action was diluted because of the laborer's concern for his family. Even while suffering under the capitalist lash, a worker feared joining the union because it might jeopardize his job and his family's survival. With too many mouths to feed, the worker could not spare even a few

centimes to support the syndicat. His commitment to a strike was diminished by the reality that his children were going to go hungry. Thus, the authors conceded, the limiting of families was a revolutionary act. Fewer children would allow workers to think only of the class struggle. The use of birth control, the pamphlet concluded, would bring into being "a generation to tumble the edifice of hideous capitalism." (102)

For syndicalists, birth control was a means by which to assure the advent of a new socialist future. It was also regarded as a way to improve conditions in the present by redressing the social balance that had been skewed by capitalist greed. The earth was capable of supporting twenty times more people, observed D. Sieruin in La Voix du Peuple in 1902. If society were organized properly an equilibrium between production and consumption would exist. There would be no need for workers then to restrain their families, since each man would consume the equivalent of his own production. But in contemporary society, profit was drained away by the capitalist, so the worker was left with only one-third of his production. The result was that workers had to limit further their consumption. By being so prolific, Sieruin conceded, French workers were "the authors of their own misery." The only way to arrest the plummeting spiral was by practicing self-restraint: workers must no longer abandon themselves "like beasts to their procreative faculties." (103)

Birth control and abortion were regarded by libertarians as a necessary adjunct to free union. Neo-Malthusianism was also the means by which women could control their bodies and thereby express their individualism. Numerous articles appeared in the anarchist press praising birth control as a revolutionary act and suggesting home remedies to prevent pregnancy. (104) Women were "martyrs of a gutless society," proclaimed Suzanne Carruette in 1900, because of their procreative abilities. Women must demand the right to abstain from having children. Would the right to control their own bodies mean that women would never choose to have children, as so many critics charged? Not at all, concluded Carruette. For in an equitable society, maternity would be willingly accepted by women as "a promise of future joy." (105) A contributor to La Guerre Sociale supported birth control as an alternative to abortion. The writer cited the fact that six abortionists had been recently arrested in the Nord. One of them had admitted to performing between two and three abortions weekly for the past fifteen years. (106) "God blesses numerous families, but he doesn't feed them," quipped Gustave Hervé in 1911. (107)

For Neo-Malthusians, limiting families through sexual restraint or with birth control devices was a moral act directed against bourgeois corruption. As might be expected, the campaign for birth control, although vigorous, did not convert everyone. In 1908 house painter Paul Guiraud complained that although the "disciples of Malthus"

were to be found in small numbers among the proletariat, the upper classes practiced birth control to a great extent.(108) The adoption of the resolution supporting Neo-Malthusian propaganda at the 1909 meeting of the leatherworkers' union was not unanimous. Shoemaker Jean Rougerie insisted that the matter was one of individual conscience, and that resolutions supporting birth control would alienate some workers from the union.(109)

Nor were all anarchosyndicalists in accord. Paul Robin and Sébastien Faure praised birth control as the means to effect "a peaceful revolution." Yet another leading anarchist, Elisée Réclus, charged that the practice would produce an elite who would ultimately reject libertarian ideals.(110) In 1906 the French population registered a decline.(111) Le Libertaire published a warning that year of the dangers of birth control practices. Specifically the writer, signed "Populo," cited the inherent danger in abortion as the means to ward off the specter of starvation. The effects of abortion on women was a serious matter. Furthermore, declared Populo, even if abortion methods were perfected and readily available, the workers' lot would not improve. If the capitalists could not exploit the cheap labor of French youths, they would simply import Chinese. Then the older generation of French workers, with no children to turn to in their declining years, would suffer even further deprivation.(112)

The fears of the effects of depopulation following in the wake of large-scale adoption of birth control practices were expressed by Gustave Hervé in a series of articles begun, ironically, in the weeks immediately preceding the July crisis in 1914. Hervé, who had been "condemned to years in a cage" for his radical views, confessed that he still supported the principle of free love. But he urged moderation in the use of birth control: the working class should not stop reproducing, but should bear only as many children as had one's parents. Total abstinence would denude France of her population, so that by the year 2112, Hervé predicted, the French would be extinct. Depopulation of France would not help labor's cause because foreign workers would be imported, becoming passive tools of capitalism. Further, noted the former "sans-patrie," who had made a pest of himself in the meetings of the Second International by his antipatriotic harangues, racial suicide would be a blow to world progress. France was "la patrie révolutionnaire" and the only "foyer of intellectual liberty and of humanity in the world at the present time." The proletariat claimed it was the class that carried "within itself the future." But the future, Hervé reminded his readers, lay with the young: it is "the children who will continue you, who prolong you, who battle at your side for your ideal of social justice and human fraternity. You're for the future? Show me your children!"(113)

MORAL AND ECONOMIC ACTIONS . . . THE ONLY PATH TO REVOLUTION

The goal of revolutionary syndicalism was Proudhonian in its basic moral vision: the salvation of civilization by the total elimination of a debauched and useless class. The proletariat would achieve this revolution because it represented the superior virtues inherent in being producers and creators. If the goals appeared to be idealistic in their grander revolutionary vision, the means--always inseparable from the end to syndicalists--were infinitely practical. Direct action in the moral and economic realms offered an open-ended spectrum of activity by which each individual could become both initiator of the revolution and an initiate in the new society syndicalism was calling into being.

Most important, as the new moral force in the world, the worker must be ethically pure. That was an enormous responsibility, particularly for the unskilled worker only recently arrived from the countryside. He was hardly the stuff of which world revolutionaries are made! Therefore the means provided by syndicalism to achieve the moral revolution were as simple as they were practical. Workers must associate in unions in order to struggle for reforms, however small. Every reform helped the worker to regain his dignity and build class consciousness, all the while chipping away at the bulwark of bourgeois evil: egoism, competition, and materialism. The worker could also stop eating meat or watching sporting events. He could bathe more often and spend Sundays with his family in the park. He could stay out of the bistros, or at least drink only wine, thereby enhancing the material well-being of his peasant comrades engaged in viniculture. Every mouthful less that he drank constituted a minor revolutionary act. He could compensate for his inadequate education by reading in bourse libraries, upgrading his technical skills in union-sponsored classes, or by listening to evening lectures on socialism and classical Greece at the people's universities. He could practice birth control, so that the fewer children he brought into the world would be assured of a better existence. As potential revolutionaries, they too must be strong and healthy.

One might wonder if the new moral universe founded on proletarian virtue, as conceived by the syndicalists, was not merely a recasting of bourgeois society: a French translation of Samuel Smiles. Clearly, insofar as the syndicalists themselves were concerned, direct action was designed to overthrow bourgeois society, not move workers into it. Syndicalism's aim was to carry out a revolution within the narrow limits prescribed by the government, without doing damage to the individual's ethical prescripts, and among a profoundly heterogeneous society: one that was localistic, particularistic, and individualistic. It was also a traditional society in a state of transition. But rapid change had not bred anomie. Rather, the culture was

composed of a rich, varied, and abundant organizational life. As James Madison had so aptly pointed out, the presence of a multiplicity of factions hindered the development of mass group loyalties. The Frenchman was fiercely devoted to his family, his commune, his quarter--and beyond that, to the overarching symbol bequeathed him by the bourgeois culture: the patrie of the Revolution.

In the face of these difficulties, what syndicalists were seeking to achieve was a permanent revolution, having as its goal the implementation of a totally just and democratic society. To accomplish that, syndicalism would have to do more than build class consciousness; it would have to create a countering paradigm--virtually another culture--autonomous and distinct from existing society, embodying within it new means of thought and action. This new culture would have to express the needs of its constituency, all the while changing completely the way individuals thought about themselves and one another. In other words, syndicalism was directed toward a thoroughgoing revamping of the social and moral relations governing society and the individual. But if this mass movement was to be democratic and truly revolutionary, it could not be dictated or imposed from above.

Sorel's observation that syndicalism was bent on creating a substitute form of allegiance was correct; only he misunderstood that syndicalists were much too practical to waste time with intellectual abstractions. The "cult of violence" would not have rallied the masses: the prospect of such immorality would have horrified most and scared the rest to death. There was nothing about direct action that was intended to be metaphorical or mythical. Syndicalist leaders understood human nature too well, knowing that the average Frenchman would prefer to doze in the safety of mythical abstractions while someone else did the world's labor. If revolution was to be the work of the producing class, the workers' actions had to be concrete and real, not cultic or symbolic.

Direct action in the economic and the moral realm was the means by which each worker might become both a participant and a director of social change. It provided the means by which the basic unit in society, the individual, could willingly carry out a collective revolutionary activity to benefit all. A solitary act against capitalist profits or toward increasing the worker's moral health, no matter how incidental or seemingly inconsequential, created a bond of allegiance among the workers that transcended family, religion, locality, patriotism, and social status. So direct action constituted a form of apprenticeship by which the individual worker learned the métier of revolution.

Given the reality of French society, that revolution would have to be episodic rather than linear, with each unit moving along at a different pace. Sometimes there would be perceptible gains; but most often the results of the

separate acts would be neither measurable nor immediate. But the goal would be achieved because the means to the end were achievable. What revolutionary syndicalism was attempting to do was to carry out by moral action a thoroughgoing democratic revolution: perhaps the first and only such attempt the world has ever seen.

NOTES

1. Annie Kriegel, "Le syndicalisme révolutionnaire et Proudhon, Le pain et les roses (Paris, 1968). Kriegel does concede some differences between Proudhon and the majority of the syndicalists, however. Proudhon was opposed to the idea of birth control and abortion, while the bourses, she notes, were "principle foyers of neo-Malthusian propaganda." (pp. 34-35).

2. James Joll, The Anarchists (New York, 1964). See particularly pp. 66-69 on Proudhon's attitudes about the moral value of work and the nature of man.

3. Le Libertaire, 22 Mar. 1903.

4. Fédération des bourses du travail de France et des colonies, Brochure de propagande syndicale (Paris, 1902), p. 18.

5. Louis Grandidier in Le Libertaire, 19 Aug. 1900.

6. "Partie non-officielle: Hygiène et sécurité du travail," Bulletin Officiel de la Bourse du Travail 83 (26 Aug. 1888): 1-2.

7. La Voix du Peuple, 18 Dec. 1904. Apparently a high degree of personal freedom was customary in French factories and workshops. Michael Hanagan quotes the observation of an English metalworker on the characteristics he found among his French counterparts in 1904.

In the workshop [in France] there is much more freedom than, I believe, exists in English factories. Discipline is by no means of a cast iron character. If Maurice or Jules have a sudden idea which they wish to communicate to Henri at the other end of the shop, they go at once, without looking around to see where the foreman is, or pretending to go on business. A good quarter of an hour is lost each morning in shaking hands and passing salutations with comrades in all parts of the factory. To omit the handshake or the "salut comrades" [sic] is a serious breach of manners. In most workshops in France smoking is allowed . . . provided there is no deliberate

wasting of time or shirking of work, the workman has the utmost freedom in the workshop, and any attempt to limit this freedom is resented as deeply as an attack on the economic position of wages and hours.

The Logic of Solidarity: Artisans and Industrial Workers in Three French Towns 1871-1914 (Urbana, Ill., 1980), pp. 11-12.

8. Confédération Générale du Travail, Rapports des comités et des commissions pour l'exercice 1904-06 (Paris, 1906), pp. 12-13.

9. Report of the XI(e) congrès [Rennes, 1898] in Confédération Générale du Travail, La confédération générale du travail et le mouvement syndical (Paris, 1925), p. 69. [Hereafter cited as La CGT et le mouvement syndical.]

10. Report at the XII(e) congress [Lyon, 1901], quoted in *ibid.*, p. 80.

11. Armand Champion, Propos syndicalistes et révolutionnaires (Paris, 1911), p. 11.

12. Fernand and Maurice Pelloutier, La vie ouvrière en France (Paris, 1900), pp. 19, 228-230.

13. Bulletin Officiel, p. 2.

14. Le Libertaire, 1 Jan. 1899.

15. Raymond Leygue quoted at a public conference celebrating May Day 1901. Printed in poster form by G. Berthoumier.

16. Lagardelle quoted in Jean Taboreau, Le sophisme antipatriotique (Paris, 1912), p. 34.

17. XVIII(e) congrès national corporatif (XII(e) de la CGT) . . . Compte rendu des travaux (Le Havre, 1912), p. 39.

18. Louis Niel quoted in Taboreau, Le sophisme, p. 13.

19. B. Jacob, Devoirs (conférences de morale individuelle et de morale sociale) (Paris, 1910), pp. 2, 99. The moral quality of joining the union was a favorite theme. Charles Janey professed that syndicalism had evolved from "the cries for moral order." Evolution de l'idée syndicale (Toulouse, 1904), p. 8.

20. Georges F. Renard and G. Weulersse. Margaret Richards, trans. Life and Work in Modern Europe

Fifteenth to Eighteenth Centuries (New York, 1968), p. 193.

21. Pelloutier frequented the compagnonnages and Griffuelhes was a member of the Ardent Corporation of Shoemakers and Bootmakers. Reported by Emile Coornaert, Les compagnonnages en France du moyen âge à nos jours (Paris, 1966), p. 22.

22. Hubert Lagardelle et al., Syndicalisme et socialisme (Paris, 1908), p. 4.

23. Lagardelle quoted in Tabareau, Le sophisme; Jouhaux quoted in V. Griffuelhes and L. Jouhaux, eds., Encyclopédie du mouvement syndicaliste (Paris, 1912), p. 8; in Maurice Donnange, Histoire du Premier Mai (Paris, 1953), p. 60.

24. Abbé André Vral, Les pages de l'ouvrier (Paris, 1905), pp. 6, 7, 10, 11, 15, 17, 21.

25. Resolution at the XIV(e) congress [Lyon, 1919]. Quoted in Maxime Leroy, Les techniques nouvelles du syndicalisme (Paris, 1921), p. 110.

26. Champion, Propos syndicalistes et révolutionnaires, pp. 9-11.

27. La Voix du Peuple, 24 June 1906.

28. Le Libertaire, 8 Sept. 1901.

29. Adrien in ibid., 24 Aug. 1901.

30. R. Vertpré in ibid., 30 Sept. 1900.

31. La Voix du Peuple, 12 Jan. 1902.

32. Ibid., 25 Dec. 1913.

33. Ibid., 12 Jan. 1902.

34. Le Libertaire, 4 Dec. 1896.

35. Ibid., 24 Sept. 1904.

36. Fernand Pelloutier, L'histoire des bourses du travail (Paris, 1900), p. 247 for quote.

37. Félicien Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste (Paris, 1909), p. 33.

38. Paul Delesalle, Les bourses du travail et la C.G.T. (Paris, n.d.), p. 27.

39. Sébastien Faure in Le Libertaire, 4 Oct. 1903.

40. La Voix du Peuple, 5 May 1901.

41. Report on "La vie chère," at the XVIII(e) congress [Le Havre, 1912], in La CGT et le mouvement syndical, p. 124.

42. La Voix du Peuple, 23 Dec. 1900.

43. Delesalle, Les bourses du travail, p. 27.

44. XVI(e) congress [Marseille, 1908], quoted in La CGT et le mouvement syndical, p. 107.

45. Congrès ouvrier régional de Bordeaux . . . (Bordeaux, 1880), p. 15.

46. X(e) congrès national corporatif (IV(e) de la confédération générale du travail) . . . Compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Rennes, 1898), p. 188.

47. Delesalle, Les bourses du travail, pp. 28-29.

48. See the following works: Université populaire: Histoire de douze ans (1898-1910), preface by Gabriel Eailles (Paris, 1910); Charles Guieysse, Les universités populaires et le mouvement ouvrier (Paris, n. d.); and Les universités populaires 1900-1901, 2 vols. (Paris, n. d.). Volume one of this latter work deals with reports from the UP's in Paris and the suburbs, catalogued first by arrondissement, then listed alphabetically for suburban organizations. Volume two lists in alphabetical order reports from the provincial UP's. The study of the UP's noted in this chapter comes from the latter two-volume work unless otherwise noted.

49. Guieysse notes that the Parisian universities tended to involve themselves in more mundane things, such as campaigning against the use of harmful substances in the factories and demonstrating support for Russian radical students living in Paris. *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 70. E. Barré, however, indicated that the program at the Paris university was a little lighter. At the 12 February 1901 soirée, he announced, one guest would recite poetry and another would discuss the crimes of Napoleon. La Voix du Peuple, 23 Dec. 1900. Of course, others disagreed on the virtues to be derived from attending the UP's. Anarchist Charles Malato wondered if anyone seriously believed that the revolution would be undertaken because the proletariat had read the classics. Le Libertaire, 24 Sept. 1904.

50. Delesalle, Les bourses du travail, p. 31.

51. Guieysse, Les universités populaires, p. 6.

52. Ibid., pp. 4, 16.

53. Quotes appear in *ibid.*, pp. 8-10.

54. Ledoux in *ibid.*, p. 32.

55. See the article by P. E. Prestwich on the linkage between middle-class reformers and working-class groups involved in the temperance campaign. "French Workers and the Temperance Movement," International Review of Social History 25 (1980): 35-52.

56. Fernand and Maurice Pelloutier, La vie ouvrière, pp. 312-316 on alcoholism. See also P. E. Prestwich, "Temperance in France: The Curious Case of Absinthe." Historical Reflections 6 (Winter 1979): 301-319 for a discussion of the battle to outlaw absinth consumption waged by temperance advocates.

57. Auguste Besse, Education sociale. Les lois sociales et le syndicalisme (Paris et Cahors, 1908), p. 20.

58. X(e) congrès [Rennes, 1898], pp. 353-360 for the report on alcoholism. The program articulated at this congress remained an integral part of the CGT's official policy on alcoholism. Workers must educate themselves and one another against the evils of drink. They must organize cooperatives in order to keep "the capitalists' patent poison" off the market. But these were only anodynes. Until the social revolution was achieved, workers should demand that the production, regulation, and sale of alcohol be placed under the administration of a commission composed of doctors, chemists, hygienists, and workers.

59. Rapports des comités, pp. 12-13. Long hours and alcoholism contributed to higher incidences of tuberculosis, charged Gustave Cauvin.

60. Raymond Joran, L'organisation syndicale dans l'industrie du bâtiment (Paris, 1914), p. 210.

61. La Voix du Peuple, 14 Feb. 1902.

62. Ibid., 14 Sept. 1902.

63. Fernand and Maurice Pelloutier, La vie ouvrière, p. 321.

64. X(e) congrès [Rennes, 1898], p. 355. It might be noted that the French and their government made a distinction between "natural" alcohol, such as beer, cider, and wine (the latter termed a "natural and hygienic" drink), and "industrial" alcohol, which was made from grains, beets, or molasses. Prestwich, "French Workers and the Temperance Movement," p. 35.

65. D. Sieruin in La Voix du Peuple, 14 Sept. 1902.
66. Fernand and Maurice Pelloutier, La vie ouvrière, p. 314.
67. Dr. [Paul-Maurice] Legrain, "Alcoolisme," Encyclopédie du mouvement syndicaliste, pp. 60-64.
68. Reported in J. B. Sévérat, Le mouvement syndical, vol. 7 of Encyclopédie socialiste, syndicale, et coopérative de l'internationale ouvrière 1912-1913 (Paris, 1912-1913), p. 246.
69. X(e) congrès [Rennes, 1898], pp. 356-357.
70. La Voix du Peuple, 17 Oct. 1909.
71. Le Libertaire, 1 Nov. 1902.
72. La Voix du Peuple, 4 Dec. 1904.
73. La Guerre Sociale, 1 July 1908.
74. La Voix du Peuple, 20 July 1902.
75. Ibid., 16 Dec. 1900. Jean Foré declared that cafés flourished in spite of the laws regulating drunkenness. Why? Because the legislators themselves were the bistros' most frequent users. Le Libertaire, 7 May 1904.
76. La Voix du Peuple, 6 Jan. 1901.
77. X(e) congrès [Rennes, 1898], p. 149.
78. La Voix du Peuple, 6 Jan 1901.
79. X(e) congrès [Rennes, 1898], p. 356.
80. Ibid., pp. 147-148.
81. La Voix du Peuple, 9 Oct. 1904.
82. Griffuelhes and Jouhaux, eds., Encyclopédie du mouvement syndicaliste, p. 64.
83. La Voix du Peuple, 23 Oct. 1910.
84. Ibid., 6 Dec. 1901.
85. Le Libertaire, 28 Mar. 1896.
86. Ibid., 21 Oct. 1901.

87. Ibid., 21 Dec. 1885.
88. Ibid., 27 Aug. 1905.
89. La Voix du Peuple, 23 Dec. 1900; 6 Jan. 1901.
90. P. Chanvin in Information Ouvrière et Sociale, 7 Mar. 1918.
91. Resolution at the X(e) congress [Rennes, 1898], quoted in La CGT et le mouvement syndical, p. 69.
92. Bulletin Officiel, pp. 2-3.
93. XVIII(e) congrès [Le Havre, 1912], pp. 66-67 for discussion; quote on pp. 20-21.
94. Noted in a discussion of the X(e) congrès [Rennes, 1898], pp. 66-67.
95. Even during the war, when the work force was being decimated, the unions called for longer mandatory schooling and apprenticeships. Dumoulin felt this was necessary because the war had demoralized the working class. Education must counter "the bad habits, errors, corruptions" now prevalent among the proletariat, he insisted. Information Ouvrière et Sociale, 24 (Mar. 1918). Mme. Brunschwig agreed that better technical, intellectual, and moral training was necessary because the younger generation would have to fend for itself in a world in which so many fathers had been sacrificed. Ibid., 7 Apr. 1918.
96. Fernand and Maurice Pelloutier, La vie ouvrière, p. 19. Duveau notes that during the Second Empire the better paid workers wanted fewer children, and that workers in large industries were more prolific than those in the ateliers. He attributes this fact either to boredom, or an optimistic faith in capitalism. Georges Duveau, La vie ouvrière en France sous le Second Empire (Paris, 1946), p. 433.
97. Paul Robin quoted by Louis Grandidier in La Voix du Peuple, 4 Dec. 1910. Workers in their congresses also discussed the need for birth control as an aid to revolution.
98. Roy at the Sixième congrès de la fédération nationale des cuirs et peaux (Paris, 1909), p. 84.
99. La Voix du Peuple, 13 Oct. 1912.
100. Birth control was a departure from both Marx and Proudhon, Ronsin notes. Lenin also opposed it, saying that Neo-Malthusianism would retard the class best prepared to make the revolution. A large proportion of members of the

Neo-Malthusian Group of Auxerre in 1914 were listed as workers. Of these, a high majority were syndicalists and antimilitarists. Usually those unions with a high Guesdist orientation were opposed to birth control, probably because of their Marxian orthodoxy. See Francis Ronsin, La grève des ventres: Propaganda néo-malthusienne et baisse de la natalité en France, 19^(me)-20^(me) siècles (Paris, 1980), pp. 171-173; membership list on pp. 112-115. Ronsin also notes that many neo-Malthusians extolled the virtues of the x-ray for painless sterilization. P. 53.

101. Kriegel, Le pain et les roses, p. 34.

102. "La Commission," Syndicalisme et néo-malthusianisme (Lille, 1911), pp. 2, 4 for quotes.

103. La Voix du Peuple, 21 Sept. 1902.

104. See for example Le Libertaire, 2 Dec. 1900.

105. Ibid., 22 Apr. 1900.

106. La Guerre Sociale, 20 May 1908.

107. Ibid., 12 Apr. 1911.

108. La Voix du Peuple, 13 Sept. 1908.

109. Jean Rougerie in Compte rendu du septième congrès national de la fédération nationale des cuirs et peaux (Paris, 1911), p. 12.

110. Marie Fleming, The Anarchist Way to Socialism: Elisée Réclus and Nineteenth-Century European Anarchism (London, 1979), p. 231.

111. Paul Louis, Histoire de la classe ouvrière en France de la révolution à nos jours (Paris, 1927), p. 179. See also Joseph J. Spengler, France Faces Depopulation (Durham, 1938).

112. Le Libertaire, 30 Dec. 1905.

113. Hervé in La Guerre Sociale, 17, 24 June 1914; 1, 15, 22, 28 July 1914.

PERSONS CITED

Adrien [Georges Darien] (1862-1921), a romantic revolutionary and extreme antimilitarist who believed that "only war alone could kill militarism completely."

Bellot, Etienne (?-?), born in Marseille in 1865. A carpenter by trade, but a journalist by avocation. His

mother was the daughter of a wealthy man, but Bellot preferred the life of a radical. He was a militant socialist.

Blanchard, Joseph (1860-1927), born at Nantes. He taught carpentry at the municipal school. Attended numerous congresses of the FBT, the CGT, and socialist parties. Supported the general strike but also helped mediate employee disputes to a settlement. A candidate in numerous elections.

Bouvard, A (?-?), an artificial-flower maker, Mademoiselle Bouvard attended the 1900 CGT congress and wrote articles for socialist and syndicalist papers.

Bruckère, A (?-?), militant of the Seine, collaborator on La Guerre Sociale from 1907 to the war.

Chalopin, André (?-?), born in the Aube. Secretary of a teachers' union from 1919 to the war. He was a voice of moderation on antimilitarism, claiming that the Sou du soldat was really a vehicle for solidarity rather than antipatriotism. He was mobilized in 1914 and killed in the first weeks of the war.

Champion, Armand (?-?), shoemaker, socialist revolutionary, bourse secretary of Blois (Loir-et-Cher).

Chanvin, Paul (1865-1938), born in Paris; died in Draveil. Chanvin's role in syndicalism was slight until 1914. He was secretary of the building workers federation from 1915 to 1921. He supported the Union sacrée. After losing his position in the federation as a result of the 1921 schism, Chanvin left Paris. His declining years were unhappy ones.

Girard, André (1860-1942), born and died in Bordeaux. He worked in the office of the prefect until it was discovered he was an anarchist. After being fired he worked as a proofreader, joining that union in 1902. He contributed to numerous papers. He advocated Neo-Malthusianism. When the war came, he had reservations about supporting the Union sacrée. After the war he joined the CGTU.

Girault, Emile (1871-1933), born at Paris of a radical family. He was a splendid orator, speaking at many conferences. He was a typographer and an anarchist. His oratory and his politics earned him numerous prison sentences. He was on the Carnet B and closely watched by the police. He supported the Russian Revolution, and after the war became an anarchocommunist in opposition to anarchist individualism.

Grandidier, Louis (1873-1931), a libertarian who exhorted his colleagues to leave their anarchist ivory towers and join the unions. He was sentenced to prison for his

antimilitarist activities. He was a bourse secretary and worked on numerous papers until 1921.

Guiraud, Paul (?-?), painter from Bordeaux. Member of the FBT and of the SFIO.

Lauche (1872-1920), born in the Landes. He was a mechanic who, at the age of thirteen, had to support his family following his father's death. At the age of eighteen he moved to Paris. Lauche joined the POSR and became a syndicalist and secretary of his union. He was in the reformist camp in 1906. He was active in a cooperative and in the SFIO after its organization. Lauche was elected to the Chamber and supported the Government of National Defense during the war.

Malato de Cornet, Charles (1857-1938), born in the Meurthe-et-Moselle; died at Paris. He accompanied his Communard father into exile in New Caledonia. Charles was a militant anarchist, who worked as a proofreader and publicist. He collaborated on numerous newspapers and wrote works on anarchism. He supported the defense of France in 1914.

Martin, Constant (1839-1906), born in the Basses-Alpes, died in Paris. Blanquist, then anarchist involved in the Commune. After his amnesty from deportation, he collaborated with Pouget on anarchist journals. He was sentenced to twenty years of forced labor because of his terrorist activities. He fled to London, and in 1896 he was acquitted.

Quillient, E. (?-?), at several congresses of the CGT and FBT.

Rougerie, Jean (1869-1931), born in the Haute-Vienne. He was a vigorous propagandist for syndicalism. He served in several directing posts in the bourse, cooperatives, and the shoemakers' union. He joined the SFIO, and was regarded as an orator who was listened to when he spoke. He was elected a municipal councilor for Limoges before and after the war. He opposed the Union sacrée and Jouhaux in 1915.